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Mr. *B R A D Y*'s  
**S E R M O N**

P R E A C H E D

**At the Funeral**

OF

*T H O M A S* *S H A D W E L L*, Esquire.

*G. Bolonile, D. 94.*  
*Dr. 6.8*

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# Imprimatur,

*Novemb. 28.*  
1691.

Carolus Alston.

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A  
SERMON  
PREACHED

At the Funeral

O F

THOMAS SHADWELL, Esq;  
L A T E

Poet-Laureat, and Historiographer-Royal,  
who was Interred at *Chelfea*, November 24. 1692.

By *Nicholas Brady*, Minister of *St. Catharine Cree-Church*, and Chaplain to his Grace the Duke of *Ormond*.

Published at the Earnest Request of the Friends of  
the Deceased.

L O N D O O N ,

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REV. xiv. and part of Verse 13.

*Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord.*

The whole Verse runs thus:

*And I heard a voice from Heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labour, and their Works do follow them.*

**I**S Death then a Blessing? Is that King of Terrours an Object of Desire? Is the common Aversion of human Nature a thing fit to be courted and embraced? Can the first Curse of God upon Sin and Disobedience become a just Matter of Interest and Advantage? Is Blessedness

the Companion of Rottenness and Corruption? And does it dwell so meanly and retiredly? How much mistaken then are the Generality of Mankind, who seek for it in the noisy Tumults of a busie Court, amongst a glittering Collection of Gold and Jewels, in the divertive Society of the Witty, and the Beautiful; when it is only to be found within the silent Chambers of the Grave, amongst a ruinous Heap of Dust and Ashes, with mouldring Bones, and putrifying Carcasses. This is a Paradox so strange, and so surprizing, so hard to Flesh and Blood, so contrary to the Notions which are generally entertained, and so seemingly contradictory in its self; that it needed no less than a Divine Authority to usher it in, and a Celestial Herald to Proclaim and Recommend it, *And I heard a voice from Heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead.*

But is there no Distinction in the Grave? no sort of Difference between the Godly and the Wicked? Is Blessedness the common and indifferent Lot of both? In vain then do we wish or endeavour to die the Death of the Righteous, and to have our latter end like his: Death will most certainly arrive,  
and

and if this Supposition be true, Blessedness will as certainly attend it; and the foolish Epicure may be justified in his Saying, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die.* This is an Opinion too loose to be admitted, and draws after it a Train of Consequences too fatal to be allowed; and therefore we find a necessary Condition specified and annexed, by which the Dead must be qualified for Blessedness; *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.*

To *die in the Lord*, is to die in his Fear, and in his Favour; to die with the Testimony of a good Conscience, in relation to ones self, and with a well grounded Confidence in respect of God; to have the happy Entertainment, when he casts his Eyes backwards, of a well-spent Life; and the comfortable Prospect, when he looks forwards, of a Blessed Immortality; to have those Words continually ringing in his dying Ears, of *Well done, good and faithful servant*, as a due Character of his Life past, *and enter thou into the joy of thy Lord*, as a happy Draught of that which is to come; to fall asleep, as it were, in the Arms of his Redeemer; and to be lulled to his long Repose in the Embraces of  
his

his Saviour; to lay down his Life with a certain Assurance of taking it up again, as knowing that it is hid with Christ in God; to go out of this World with a firm Persuasion of entering into a better; to have a lively Faith within a dying Body, and a Hope that flourishes under the Decays of Nature; to have an intire Resignation to the Divine Will, and to put his Death as well as Life into the Hands of God. This is the full and perfect meaning of that short, but comprehensive Expression, *To die in the Lord*: and since we find Blessedness annexed to that Condition, it should forcibly engage us to endeavour its Attainment. *Blessed, &c.*

In my following Discourse therefore upon this Solemn Occasion, I shall insist upon these two Particulars.

First, I shall lay down the proper Method which we ought to make use of, in order to attain to the happy Condition, of *dying in the Lord*.

Secondly, I shall prove the thing affirmed in my Text, that *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord*.

First then, I shall lay down the proper Method which we ought to make use of, in order

order to attain to the happy Condition, of *dying in the Lord*.

1. To *die in the Lord*, is a thing so valuable in it self, and attended with Circumstances so precious and considerable, that we cannot suppose its Purchase to be easie; but must allow the Price of such a Blessing to bear some Proportion to the Greatness of its Advantages. We cannot therefore promise our selves with any manner of security, that it shall be the Reward of a few sick Prayers, or a Death-bed Repentance; they who would be certain of *dying in the Lord*, must stedfastly resolve to live in him; and that whole Life is happily laid out, by which we are assured of so blessed a Conclusion: Some perhaps may flatter themselves, that a happy End is not inconsistent with a wicked Life; that the Mercy of God will work out their Salvation, even in their own despight; that they may enjoy the World here, and Heaven hereafter; that they may live to the Flesh, and yet die in the Lord: But let us not thus deceive our own Souls, God is not thus mocked; his Mercy is truly infinite, but so are also his Justice and his Truth; nor will he so far be swayed by that, tho his beloved

his darling Attribute, as to forfeit or forego the other two; there must be some satisfaction made to these, before we can enjoy the Refreshings of the former; otherwise, this God of Mercy will laugh at our Calamities, and mock when our Fear comes. He, who totally applies himself to the Enjoyments of this Life, and manages his time as if there were no other, can never expect any Comfort or Satisfaction, when he is entering upon a State that he so little thought of: he is tied and wedded to the things of this World, and it is a tearing him from all that he values or esteems, to bring him to that Passage which leads into another. To such a Man Death comes arrayed with all his Pomp of Terrour; if he looks upon that World which he is about to take leave of, he finds that he is parting with his dearest Companion, the delight of all his Senses, and the Comfort of his Soul: if he looks upon that World which he is about to go into, he has made no Acquaintances there, secured no Interests, engaged no Friendships, to render his future Abode delightful and agreeable: if he is so stupid and inconsiderate, as to have no prospect of the Misery that

that attends him, yet at best, he sees nothing before him but Darkness and Confusion, *a Land of Silence where all things are forgotten.* It is therefore absolutely necessary, that we live here, as Probationers for Heaven and Happiness, if we expect hereafter to be partakers of that Blessedness, which is the Portion of those *dead who die in the Lord.*<sup>a</sup> You have been told already, that to *die in the Lord*, is to die in his Fear, and in his Favour; But how shall he die in the Fear of the Lord, whose Days have been consumed in the Contempt of his Commandments? Or how shall he die in the Favour of the Lord, whose Life has been full of rebellious Provocations? He may die indeed under the Terrours of the Lord, but not in his Fear; or perhaps flatter'd by his own deceitful Heart, but not favour'd by the Almighty. Indeed could we all *know our End, and the Number of our Days*; and were every one of us *certified how long he has to live*, it might seem tolerably safe, to devote some part of our Life to Sin and Folly, reserving at the same time a considerable Portion, for the After-Exercises of Piety and Devotion; we might then for some years indulge our sinful Ap-  

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petites,



petites, and set by so many more for the working out our Salvation: But alas! we know not how soon Death may seize upon us; his Arrest may be sudden, surprising, and unlooked for; we ought therefore to live in the constant expectation, and be conversant perpetually in our Preparations for it: *Watch ye therefore*, says our Saviour, *for ye know neither the day nor the hour, wherein the Son of Man cometh*: And what will become of us, if our Lord, when he comes, shall find us sleeping? It will then be in vain to ask, when he will be no more entreated; in vain to seek him, when he will not be found; in vain to knock, when the Gate is shut against us: then if we cry never so much, *Lord, Lord, open unto us*; we shall receive no other Answer but a positive Denial: *Verily, I say unto you, I know you not, Depart from me ye workers of iniquity*. This Life is the Day wherein we must work; *the Night of Death* is drawing on apace, *wherein no Man can work*; and besides the great Danger of being surprized by that; how madly does he proceed, that squanders away the Morning and the Noon of Life, and sets not about his Days work until the Evening! How comfortless



fortless every night must that Man lie down  
 to his necessary Repose, that knows not, but  
 he may wake in another World, and yet  
 finds himself to be unprepared for it? Can  
 any Man be secure of *dying in the Lord*, that  
 takes no care to go to Bed in his Favour, and  
 yet cannot tell but he may die before he rises?  
 He that would make sure of so blessed a Con-  
 dition, should live every Day, as if it were  
 his last; be always disintangled from the  
 Cares of this World, as if he were then upon  
 taking his leave of it; have his thoughts still  
 fixed upon a Blessed Eternity, as if he were  
 just launching out into it: for *our Lord may*  
*come in a day when we look not for him,*  
*and in an hour that we are not aware of;* and  
 therefore, the only sure Way, not to be ta-  
 ken unprovided, is to be every hour prepa-  
 red, as if that were it. It is an easie thing to  
 say, I will repent to morrow, I will consider  
 my ways, and fit my self for my end; but  
 are we sure that to-morrow is our own?  
 And may not our Case be like the rich Man's  
 in the Gospel, whose Soul was required of  
 him that very night? The Disappointment  
 in this Case is so very dreadful, being not on-  
 ly the loss of a few hours which we proposed  
 to

to our selves here, but of a joyful Eternity in the World which is to come; that it will highly concern every reasonable Man, timely to provide against so dismal a Misfortune: and this can be done no better a way, than by a stedfast Faith, and an uniform Obedience.

1. Then, a stedfast Faith is an excellent Preparative, to qualifie us at all times, for *dying in the Lord.*

*Faith*, says the Apostle, *is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen:* by this we depend upon the Promises of God, and settle to our selves a firm assurance of them; this discloses to us the Secrets of the invisible World, and makes us familiar with that Land of Spirits; it sets Heaven and Happiness before our Eyes; *it lifts up the Heads of those eternal Gates, and sets wide open the everlasting Doors;* it gives us a Relish and Antepast of that Glory which shall one day be revealed, and makes us *taste and see how good the Lord is:* By this, *Stephen* saw the Glory of God, and *Jesus* standing on the Right Hand of the Almighty; by this, *St. Paul* was rap'd into the third Heaven, and heard and saw such things as were unspeakable;

unspeakable; through this he desired to be dissolved, and to be with Christ; this made all the Sufferings of Martyrs and Confessors, easie to them and delightful; this supports the Faithful in the Agonies of Death, and makes up in a very great measure, the Blessedness of those *dead which die in the Lord.* But

2. An uniform Obedience is an excellent Preparative, to qualifie us at all times for *dying in the Lord.*

This secures to us those precious Advantages, which Faith but reveals; and entitles us to the Treasures, which that only discloses: this fits us for the Enjoyment of a Blessed Immortality, and applies to us the Promises of eternal Felicity: that indeed shews us what Heaven is, but this assures us, that it is ours; that gives us a View of everlasting Happiness, this puts us actually in possession of it. For Christianity, my Brethren, is not a bare Speculation; it is defined to be a Practical Science; and the main intent of it is to regulate our Actions. It is true indeed, in order to that it must inform our Understandings; but if it operates upon us no farther, it only enhances the Heinousness of our Transgressions, by making every offence become a sin against

against Knowledge. And therefore we find the Holy Apostle, when he compares together the three great Christian Graces, giving the Preference to that which is Practical, to the prejudice of the others which are chiefly Contemplative. *Now remain ( says he ) Faith, Hope, Charity, these three: but the greatest of these is Charity.* He then, who is always conversant in the Duties of his Profession, always employed in the Exercises of Devotion, and keeps a *Conscience void of offence towards God, and towards man:* he is the Man who, let Death come when it will, is never found dejected or unprovided: *Blessed is that wise and faithful servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing:* he takes the surest and most infallible way, to secure to himself, whenever he shall die, *the Blessedness of those dead which die in the Lord.*

2. And this leads me to the Consideration of my second General; namely, to prove the thing affirmed in my Text, that *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.*

Death is to be considered under a double Notion; either as it is a Passage out of this World, or as it is an Entrance into another; and under each of them, it appears to the  
unwary

unwary Examiner, a matter of Terroure and of Trouble. To leave all the engaging Entertainments, all the agreeable Societies and Diversions, to which we have been accustomed and familiar from our Cradles; and to pass into a place that we never yet frequented, to go into a Land that we never before travelled, and to enter upon a condition that we never yet experienced; these Reflections, I say, to such as only dwell upon superficial Appearances, and never pry into the Bottom of Affairs, are strangely frightful and discouraging: but if we will give our selves the useful Labour of considering Matters more strictly and deliberately, we shall find, that let us take it which way we will, to such as *die in the Lord, death is a Blessing*.

First, Then, let us consider Death as a Passage out of this World, and in relation to that Notion of Death we shall find, *That blessed are the dead which die in the Lord*.

A considerable Instance of their Blessedness, or that wherein (as to this particular) it especially consists, is assigned by the Holy Ghost, in the Words immediately consequent to my Text; *And I heard a voice from Heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead*

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which

*which die in the Lord, from henceforth: For,* saith the Spirit, *that they may rest from their labours.* For the Life of a good Christian is a Life of Labour; he is born to it, as the Sparks fly upwards; he is every where beset with Difficulties; and with many Enemies must he encounter; the World hates him, because he is not of it; God often tries him with Temptations and Afflictions, and his Conscience is always keeping him to his Task of *working out his salvation with fear and trembling*; he is obliged to be constantly upon the Watch; to bear the Shocks of Satan, and the Contradictions of Sinners; so that *if in this life only he had hopes, he were of all men the most miserable.* But how joyfully does he welcome the Approaches of his End, by which he shall be freed from the forementioned Troubles! Death appears to him as pleasing and desirable, as Health, after a dangerous and troublesome Distemper, as Rest after a toilsome and laborious Journey, as Sleep after a tedious and uneasy Watching, as the Port after a stormy and tempestuous Voyage. He had no such intimate Engagements with the World, as may  
render

render it unsupportable to part with it ; he has nothing of Earth to hang heavy upon his Soul, to clog its flight, or weigh it downwards to this dull Centre of Corruption ; it is long since that the World and he took leave of one another ; he has a long time been dead to that, having *mortified his Members*, which were upon the Earth ; he can have no Regret for parting with that, of which he never entertain'd any tolerable good Opinion ; all whose Advantages he has found to be but *Vanity*, and all its *Entertainments Vexation of Spirit* : Nay further, he reflects upon what he is to leave with Comfort and Satisfaction ; he parts with nothing but an inveterate Enemy, who has all his life long been endeavouring to destroy him ; has still put stumbling Blocks in his Way to Heaven and Happiness, and been misleading him from the Paths of everlasting Felicity. Those few good Men which he leaves behind, and to whom his Soul is chiefly linked on this side Heaven, he hopes to see again with ineffable Delight ; and is but going as a Harbinger to prepare their Way : No Ties of Nature or of Blood can bind him, since they are all swallowed up in



the Love of his Creator, and in the near expectation of the Fruition of him. Thus the World and the Flesh hang loose about him; his active Soul is just upon the Wing; and he parts from hence as an industrious Traveller from a sorry Inn, where the ill Accommodation made his Stay uneasy, and the opportunity of leaving it, welcom and agreeable. *Blessed therefore are the dead which die in the Lord*; if we look upon Death as a Passage out of this World; for *they rest from their labors*.

But since the Word which is here render'd to rest, does more properly signifie to ease or to refresh; and consequently this Resting does not mean a bare and unactive Cessation from Labour; but a State of perfect Complacency and Satisfaction; I therefore proceed to consider Death.

Secondly, As the entrance into another World, and in relation to that Notion of Death, we shall find, that *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord*.

A considerable Instance of their Blessedness, or that wherein (as to this particular) it especially consists, is given us by the same Holy Spirit, in the last Words of this Verse, *whereof*



whereof my Text is part: *And I heard a voice from Heaven, saying unto me; Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.*

According to the Works which we have done in the Body, so shall we be dealt with in the World which is to come; then shall we receive a suitable Retribution, according to our Actions, whether good or evil. *The Judge of all the Earth will then do Right, and be justified in all his Doings, and his Sayings.* Indeed the ordinary Dispensations of Providence are here so unaccountable, that they scarcely suffice to justify the Ways of God to Man; common Blessings are dispensed indifferently, and *his Sun shines upon the Just and the Unjust*; nay, sometimes, and generally, the Ungodly prosper, and the Men that work Righteousness are miserable and oppressed. But in that World which is to come, eternal Happiness will be entail'd upon the Righteous, and everlasting Tribulation shall be the Portion of the Wicked: Then shall God's Justice appear to act regularly, and either stop the Mouths of all Gainsayers, or open them.

them to confess, That *verily there is a reward for the righteous.* Doubtless there is a God that judgeth the Earth. Certainly all the Blandishments and Flatteries of this World can have nothing so delightful in them, nothing that can so truly affect a rational Soul, as the Prospect of those Joys which are laid up for them which *die in the Lord*; and the Sound of those Words ringing in their dying Ears, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world.* Then shall their Saviour enumerate their good Actions, and set before their Eyes those works which follow them, laying them down as the Reasons of their blessed Entertainment. *For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was naked, and ye cloathed me; I was sick and in prison, and ye visited me.* How pleasing and agreeable must the Surprise then be, when they find every Instance of Charity and Compassion, which they formerly extended to their distressed Brethren, accepted and rewarded as fully and effectually, as if it had been performed to Christ himself: *Verily, I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it to the least of these my Brethren,*  
ye

*ye have done it unto me.* Then every Action of Piety and Devotion, every Advancement in Godliness and Holiness, every Christian Combat and Struggling with Temptations, every single Act of Faith and Resignation, shall have its due Commendation and particular Regard. How delightful and ravishing will the Prospect be, when all their Virtues shall be thus ranked in order, and attend them jointly to the Throne of Grace, and there present themselves in their Favour and Behalf, as so many Offerings of a *sweet smelling savour!* Then shall their Redeemer know his own *by these their Fruits*, and *confess them before his Father which is in Heaven*; and they shall see face to face *the Holiest of Holies, in whose presence is fullness of joy.* The Scene is: so glorious, and so transcendently inviting, that it needs no Foil, no Painter's Art of Shades and darker Colours, to give these brighter ones more Splendor and Vivacity; and therefore it needs not to be set off, by comparing it with the miserable condition of such unhappy Wretches, whose Works are said to go before them unto Judgment: Sense cannot reach the Beauty of it, nor Imagination figure any Resemblance to it; *for eye hath*

*hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it enter'd into the heart of man to conceive the things which God has prepared for them that love him. Blessed therefore are the dead which die in the Lord, if we look upon Death as the Entrance into another World, For their Works do follow them.*

Into this happy State and Condition, I hope, our deceased Brother is already enter'd; with whom my Acquaintance was so intimate, during my short Familiarity with him, that it qualified me to know him as well, as those who had conversed with him much longer: and I cannot but do his Memory that Justice, to declare, that during the time of my Acquaintance with him, I found in him a most zealous Affection to the present Government, a great deal of Honesty and Integrity, a real Love of Truth and Sincerity, an inviolable Fidelity and Strictness to his Word, an unalterable Friendship wheresoever he professed it, (and however the World may be mistaken in him) a much deeper Sense of Religion, than many others have, who pretend to it more openly: His natural and acquired Abilities made him sufficiently remarkable to all  
that



have infringed his Will in this particular, but that I was willing to inform the World, how much some People have erred in their Opinion of him.

Let us then, in the Name God, so manage our selves, during the Course of this Life, that we may be qualified for the Enjoyment of a better; that when we shall go hence and be no more seen, we may rest from our labours, not enter upon greater Miseries, and that our works which shall follow us, may recommend, and not impeach us: that so we may have a just Title to that Blessedness, which is the portion of those dead which die in the Lord. To which, God, of his infinite Mercy, bring us all through the Merits and Mediation of our Blessed Saviour: to whom with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be ascribed all Honour, Power, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, henceforth, and for evermore. Amen.

**F I N I S.**

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